

was not included as best music venue. They consistently offer the best music choices and have changed the music scene in Eugene more than any venue.

Over-voted, indeed.

John Carlson  
Eugene

## THANKS TO SHELTERCARE

I'm a ShelterCare recipient and with my drug addictive past and mental disorders that go with that, I was given an apartment through a federal grant called The 18 Bed Grant. The government lets 18 homeless people have housing with really no strings attached.

Two months after moving into my apartment, I decided one day I didn't want or need the heroin I'd been doing for 18 years. I went to prison in 2007 from the multitudes of meth possessions I had racked up being a tweaker on the streets. I came out of DOC a heroin addict.

I was sick one day waiting with money in hand for the devil herself, my heroin dealer. Made me wait hours for her in the Red Apple parking lot or the 7-11 for all to

see, if they knew what a junkie looks like.

I decided I had enough and went into Buckley House that same day; the angels at Buckley finally got me the help they had tried to give me for years and I am now clean and sober for 19 months. I thank the unconditional love from Buckley House and the angels at ShelterCare and I have done the groundwork, but with the grace of God have stayed and will be clean.

Aaron Smith  
Springfield

## DONATE NOW

Donate money to the Southern Poverty Law Center. Make America Great Again. Do it today.

Gary Carl  
Oakridge

## KINDNESS AND COMPASSION

Big surprise in the election. Glad it didn't change the effort to help homeless youth ("15th Night Project Aims to Reduce Youth Homelessness" by Kianna Cabuco, *Eugene Weekly*, Nov. 10, 2016). Grateful it didn't end the LCC program for women in transition

("LCC's Women in Transition Program Celebrates 30 Years" by Kelly Kenoyer, *Eugene Weekly*, Nov. 10, 2016).

Many other examples of kindness and compassion continue. My work to pass the Reach Every Mother and Child Act recently got commitments from more Members of the House, bringing the number of cosponsors to 214, nearly half the House, and 26 senators, bringing hope for the 5.9 million children and 289,000 mothers who die each year from mostly preventable causes.

So grieve for what might have been, but then focus on using your voice for change. Not sure what to do? Try RESULTS (results.org) and raise your voice to bring an end to hunger and poverty in our country and our world.

Willie Dickerson  
Snohomish, Washington

## USE YOUR WORDS

The presidential election was a referendum on whether the First Amendment should endure. Free speech is under attack by Social Justice Warriors. Rather than using facts and logic to combat words, SJWs

no-platform and punish those with whom they disagree.

The First Amendment is first for a reason. The unfettered exchange of ideas is the foundation upon which tolerant and prosperous societies are constructed.

Since 1972, I voted Democrat for President nine times and for Ralph Nader twice. This year, I voted Trump. Hillary panders to political correctness while Trump fights it. If Hillary won, she would have rewarded SJWs with laws restricting speech. Hillary was the greater threat to democracy. Millions agree. Ask us why.

Hillary's narrative was that anyone not voting the vagina is a sexist, racist, hate-filled, know-nothing, deplorable bigot. Personal attacks are not a valid argument.

I don't care if SJW's feelings are triggered by my horrific words. It is long overdue to debate whether the SJW narrative is based in reality.

In America you can believe anything you want, but the fact that you believe something does not make it true. If you missed the word "debate," the anti-SJW side is waiting for you to show up.

Joe Tyndall  
Eugene

# VIEWPOINT

BY RACHEL RICH, LARRY LEWIN AND ROSCOE CARON

# Election Postmortem

CORPORATIONS WIN, PUBLIC SCHOOLS LOSE

**A**s *EW* readers continue to regain balance after the presidential election, we want to reflect on two education-related measures: Measure 97, the tax on large corporations, and Measure 98, the high school graduation initiative.

Who won? Large corporations, that's who.

An estimated record \$28 million was ponied up by big corporations to defeat Measure 97. We mean big: Walmart, Ford, CVS, Boise Cascade, PGE, Weyerhaeuser, etc.

The No On 97 campaign cast the measure as a sales tax that corporations would just pass on to us — an ironic position, considering many of these same corporations have actively advocated for an Oregon sales tax for years.

Their \$10 million advantage enabled the corporations to build on a general mistrust of the legislature, a skepticism toward public sector unions and a belief that those same unions will not do anything productive to help fix the PERS mess. Legislators and unions have serious work to do to increase public trust.

Corporations played a major role in Measure 98, also — the one that did pass. It requires the Oregon Legislature to fund dropout prevention and career/college readiness programs beginning in 2018 through grants to Oregon high schools of at least \$800 per student, with the state monitoring the programs. Great idea! Who would oppose this no-brainer?

We did.

The main petitioner was Stand for Children, Inc. and its Stand for Children Leadership Center, with assets of more than \$24 million, backed by ExxonMobil, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Jim Walton, the Walmart founder, among others. *The Register-Guard* reported additional big money flowed into their coffers: millions of dollars in anonymous contributions. Why anonymous? And why would these big fish weigh in on an Oregon high school ballot measure? We know that donated money often comes with strings attached, right? So, who wants large corporate powerhouses (who don't pay their fair share of taxes) pulling strings and having a strong influence on our local and state system of public education? We don't.

As longtime teachers, we certainly do not oppose hands-on learning, college and career readiness or dropout prevention programs. We worked hard in local schools to engage our students and to inspire them to be active, lifelong learners. The problems with Measure 98 are twofold: the funding part and the control part.

Estimates for implementing this new law range from \$147 million (R-G) to \$300 million (Portland State Rep. Lew Frederick's office). Where will the money come from?

Since the Legislature is now looking at a \$1.4 billion shortfall (with Measure 97's failure), the Legislature must look elsewhere — perhaps taking the funds from K-8 education or from Senior Services or Human Services. Wait. What?

Then there's the fine print in Measure 98, which strengthens the increasing control that the Oregon Department of Education has on our local school districts and schools. The elaborate paperwork demands tied to Measure 98 will detract from time and attention meant for students.

*An estimated record \$28 million  
was ponied up by big corporations  
to defeat Measure 97.*

Through "corporate education reform," we see the continued diminishing of local control and the continued increasing of corporate influence on public education across the U.S., including Oregon: corporate-initiated legislation, corporate development of the curriculum and ever-increasing standardized testing. Measure 98 now puts local high schools under even more control of a state "accountability" bureaucracy that is increasingly comfortable with the "corporate educational model."

There is nothing democratic about turning our public schools over to increasing corporate influence and mandates. Do you really believe giant corporations want an informed citizenry, equipped to effectively advocate for their rights?

Our community, our state, our entire country must double down on democracy — meaning educated, engaged citizens participating continually in public policy debates — not just in election years. A strong functioning American democracy requires the habit, the awareness and the confidence to analyze issues and take effective action. Then big money influence is reduced. If not, our democracy is severely weakened.

*Rachel Rich, Larry Lewin and Roscoe Caron are retired middle and high school teachers in Eugene and Springfield. They are members of the Community Alliance for Public Education (CAPE), dedicated to preserving our public schools to foster students to grow into critical thinkers and active citizens of our democracy. Because our mission is educating the public on these issues, we invite any and all to join us in conversations over the future of public education in our state. Find us at oregoncape.org*